



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Richard Mendoza, Director, Public Works Department
Lauraine Rizer, Director, Office of Real Estate Services

DATE: September 8, 2017

SUBJECT: Update on CIUR 1877, Red Bluff Tracts

PURPOSE: This memorandum provides a status update on staff's efforts related to Resolution No. 20170406-031.

BACKGROUND: The Resolution included two directives from Council to staff. The first directive asks staff explore using 2016 GO Bonds to fund connectivity improvements on La Loma Trail, and provide Council with options. The second piece includes direction to conduct a community-driven planning process regarding the preservation for public use of the Red Bluff Tract.

La Loma Trail

Staff from Public Works' Urban Trails Program is leading the effort with regards to the first directive to staff. The Urban Trails Program is responsible for implementing the Urban Trail Master Plan, which includes hard surface trails used for recreation and transportation. The process for an Urban Trail project begins with a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) which will evaluate the best alignment/scope for the trail, determining cost estimates for design and construction which will be used to secure future funding and the initial project schedule. Since most trails (including La Loma Trail) are proposed in environmentally sensitive areas with many constraints the PER is imperative to determine the cost estimate moving forward. The La Loma Trail PER is currently funded under the 2016 GO Bond. The PER is already underway and should be complete mid-2018.

La Loma Trail Funding Options

While this PER process is funded, no funding has been allocated for design or construction as we will need the cost estimates from the PER to determine funding needs. To fully fund this project through construction, there are two options to that could be considered.

Option 1: Pursue an Item from Council (IFC) which asks for a reallocation of funding from other named Urban Trail projects to La Loma Trail once the PER is complete and funding needs are known.

Option 2: Add funding for La Loma Trail to a future Bond program once funding needs are known.

It is important to note that all Urban Trails 2016 Bond funding is currently allocated to other trail projects. In order to divert funding to La Loma, funds would need to be reallocated from other named Urban Trail projects, effectively putting those projects on hold.

La Loma Trail Outreach

As part of the PER process staff will hold two public meetings, one toward the beginning of the process (which will happen within the next few months) and one at the end to share the PER's findings. Staff will also reach out to every neighborhood association within 500 feet of the trail and offer to present at their neighborhood association meeting. In addition to this outreach, a walking meeting is being planned with design engineers and the residents in the area. Exhibit 1, attached, shows connections being considering within the La Loma PER.

Red Bluff Tract

The Office of Real Estate Services (ORES) is leading the second directive regarding the public use of Red Bluff Tract. The City of Austin Environmental Commission's Urban Growth Policy and Development Joint Committee recommended that the City of Austin take steps to consolidate the three parcels that make up the Red Bluff tract by dedicating it as parkland.

ORES is coordinating with the three City departments who currently steward the three tracts of land: Public Works, Austin Water and Watershed Protection (see Exhibit 2). These departments will need to evaluate their department's present and future needs for the property. ORES is in the process of engaging a land planner to determine the impact of any rights transferred as they relate to the developability of the adjoining tracts for current or future use. If all departments are able to forego their stake in this land, the next step would be for ORES to submit a request to City Council to dedicate the Red Bluff tract as parkland, conservation easement or flood protection and environmental restoration. Additional costs may need to be taken into consideration including environmental site assessment and any resulting mitigation that is needed.

The Parks and Recreation Department is in full support of dedicating the Red Bluff tracts as parkland pending, a clean Environmental Site Assessment. These tracts are located in a park-deficient area and would provide a critical community connection to the Southern Walnut Creek Trail along East Boggy Creek. After such time that these tracts are dedicated parkland, the Parks and Recreation Department would then start their standard community outreach process for further programming of the land for public use.

CC: Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager
Robert Goode, Assistant City Manager
Sara Hensley, Interim Assistant City Manager
Kimberly McNeeley, Interim Director, Parks and Recreation Department

Exhibit 1

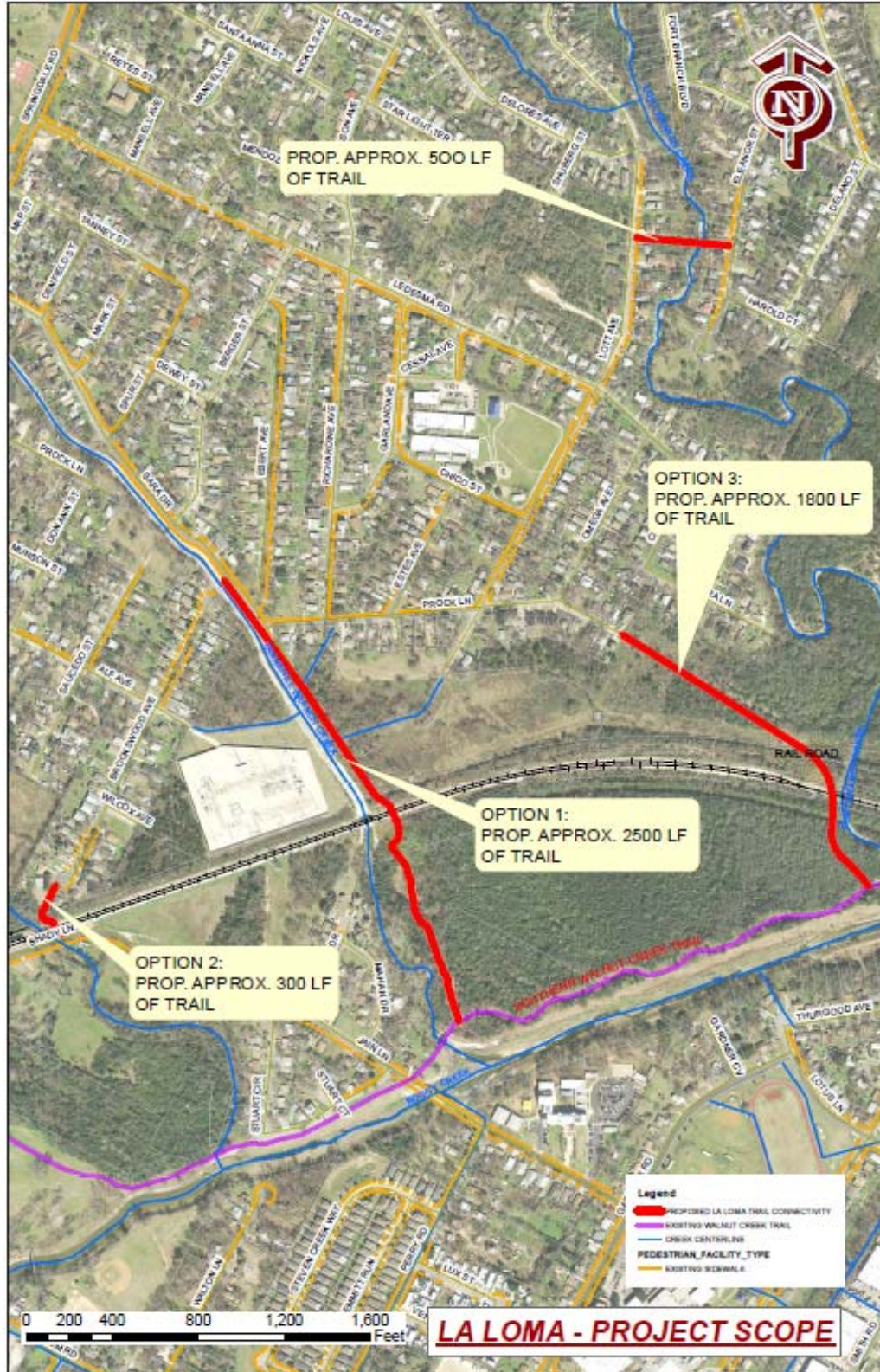
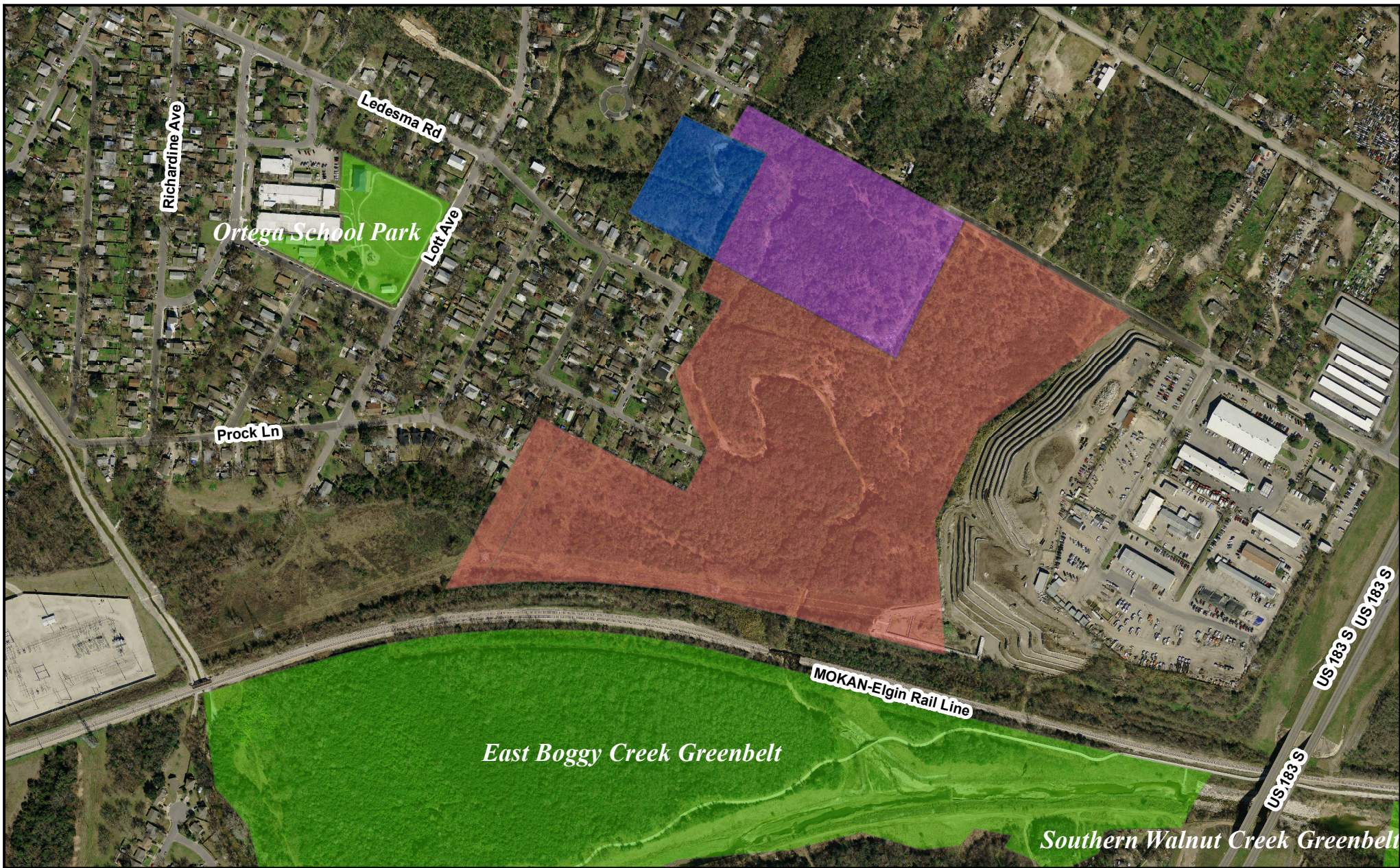
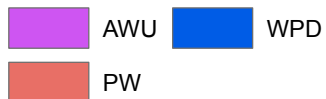


Exhibit 2

(See next page)



La Loma/Red Bluff City Owned Tracts



City of Austin
Real Estate Services

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